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ABSTRACT

The role of personal and contextual factors in predicting principals' age, gender, experience, self-concept, and personal incentives is examined in this exploratory study. Contextual factors include characteristics of the school, staff, and community, and the district's psychological environment. In a sample of 160 Illinois principals, multiple regression was used to identify significant predictors of two leadership behaviors and three management behaviors. Findings indicate that the most influential personal characteristics are individual goals and incentives, and the most influential contextual factors are district psychological environment. Staff characteristics are associated with four of the five administrative behaviors, and community characteristics are unrelated to either management or leadership functions. Four tables are included. (25 references) (LMI)

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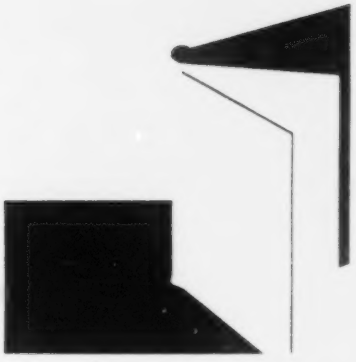

# *Relationship Between Personal and Contextual Characteristics and Principals' Administrative Behaviors*

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# The National Center for School Leadership

# Project Report

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

**College of Education**

*In collaboration with*

The University of Michigan

MetriTech, Inc.

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Our objectives are to produce new knowledge about school leadership and influence the practice and preparation of school leaders. Through various research programs and dissemination activities, we aim to give school leaders effective strategies and methods to influence teaching and learning.

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# *Relationship Between Personal and Contextual Characteristics and Principals' Administrative Behaviors*

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Abstract

An exploratory study was undertaken to determine the role of personal and contextual factors in predicting principals' gender, age, experience, self-concept, and personal incentives. Contextual factors include characteristics of the staff, school, and community, and the psychological environment of the district. Using a sample of 160 principals from Illinois, multiple regression was used to identify significant predictors of two leadership behaviors (Defining Mission and Promoting Instructional Climate) and three management behaviors (Supervising Teaching, Monitoring Student Progress, and Managing Curriculum). Most important in terms of influential personal characteristics are the incentives or goals of the individual principal. Leadership functions, in particular, seem to be influenced by a personal commitment to helping others, working with others, and trusting others. Regarding contextual influences, the psychological environment of the district influences management behaviors but not leadership behaviors. When a district emphasizes competition and social comparison, principals respond by monitoring, supervising, and managing. If, indeed, a district emphasis on competition and power is conducive to management behaviors but not to leadership behaviors on the part of principals, this has important implications for superintendents and central administrators. Community characteristics appear to be unrelated to either management or leadership functions. In contrast, staff characteristics are associated with four of the five administrative behaviors. Principals who perceive that their staffs are committed and hard working are those who engage in both management and leadership behaviors as here defined.

**Relationship between Personal and Contextual Characteristics and Principals' Administrative Behaviors**

Interest in the role of educational administration (and administrators) in creating and enhancing effective schools is by no means new or novel. Recently, however, there has been an increased concern with this relationship. With the current emphasis on the study of management generally (e.g., Gardner, 1990; Kanter, 1989), special attention has been devoted to what administrators can do to improve and strengthen their organizations. In the case of principals, the school effectiveness literature has highlighted the importance of their leadership role (e.g., Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982). Apparently effective schools have effective leaders. This literature has tended to single out principals as especially important in creating an environment that leads to improved instruction and ultimately student motivation and achievement (Murphy & Evertson, 1990). Moreover, this literature has in some cases identified a range of behaviors that characterizes effective principals. Thus there is a basis for systematic inquiry into the antecedents of these behaviors. Why do some principals act in one way and others in a different way? The goal of the research reported here is to begin to explore antecedents of principal administrative behavior. More specifically, we are concerned with how personal (individual differences) and contextual factors are differentially important in predicting the activities of principals in school settings.

Over the years, a variety of administrative behaviors have been identified and studied (Mintzberg, 1973; Murphy, 1988; Nash, 1983; Sergiovanni & Corbally, 1984; Scott, Ahadi, & Krug, 1990). In the last decade, the research on school effectiveness has yielded a more focused list. Five types of administrative behaviors have been found rather consistently to be related to the operation of effective schools (cf., Blank, 1987; Purkey & Smith, 1982): defining the purposes, goals, or mission of the school; overseeing curriculum development and implementation; supervising and counseling teachers; and monitoring student progress.

While other activities might also be deemed important such as "seeking district or community resources/support" (Blank, 1987), in this study we focus on these five for three reasons: 1) They are regularly and consistently reported as important; 2) they deal primarily with those administrative activities that operate within the closed system of the school rather than the larger organizational structure; and 3) recent work has resulted in procedures for reliable assessment of these behaviors (Ames & Maehr, 1989; Krug, 1989, (in press); Maehr & Braskamp, 1986).

In the analyses of the results we will, first of all, consider these dimensions as separate and distinct variables, each worthy of consideration in its own right.

However, it should be noted that these dimensions can be viewed as reflecting two broad domains of administrative behavior: leadership and management. While much is said in the literature related to such a distinction (e.g., Yukl, 1989), work is yet to be done to clarify the distinction between these two domains. Characteristically, a distinction is made between transforming and maintaining the organization (cf., Burns, 1978). Therewith, leadership activities are often thought to involve action directed toward changing the psychological environment of the school--its ideology, philosophy, purpose, and mission (Sarason, 1971). Management refers more to activities that are directed toward maintaining the organization as given; the focus is not on transforming or re-thinking goals and purposes. Rather, the concern is with developing and retaining processes that facilitate the attainment of accepted goals. Presumably, administrators engage in activities in both realms, sometimes virtually simultaneously. However, it is of some interest that the five dimensions of administrative behavior reflect these two functions to varying degrees. Thus on an a priori basis, one might view activities devoted to defining the school mission or promoting an instructional climate as constituting activities more in the realm of leadership functions. In contrast, one might view the management function as involving the work environment (such as managing the curriculum of the school), or the social environment (such as supervising teaching or monitoring students). For exploratory purposes, we plan to investigate this distinction between the leadership and management behaviors of principals.

The critical issue in the research to be reported in this paper is how personal (individual differences) and contextual issues relate to principal administrative behavior, however configured. To what extent are principals' involvement in either leadership or management activities shaped by their personal characteristics or by the context in which they are operating? Much research focuses on the "personality" aspects of school leadership, and, in particular, on how leaders use charisma as a source of authority (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Newman, Rutter, & Smith, in press). The latter is particularly salient in schools that are loosely coupled, that is, where administrators exercise little authority to influence instructional operations directly (Peterson, 1988; Scott & Meyer, 1987). In these organizations, personal characteristics have been found to be strongly related to principals' involvement in activities to develop a shared sense of purpose for the school (Peterson, 1988).

On the other hand, considerable research has documented that principals are largely actors inside a social setting, responding to situational and contextual characteristics (Blank, 1987; Bossert et al., 1982; Salley, McPherson, & Baehr, 1978). This research focuses on leadership and management activities as a response to school or district characteristics. Principals are seen as "captives of their

environments" (Salley et al., 1978, p. 35). The structure of the school as well as the social context of the beliefs and attitudes of the district largely determine what types of behaviors are necessary and appropriate for principals within the context of their schools.

The current study combines these two perspectives, posing the hypothesis that personal and contextual characteristics have different relationships to principals' administrative behaviors. Further, we examine how differences occur within the larger division of administration in terms of educational leadership and school management. Because these two roles operate under different circumstances and serve different functions within the school organization, we suggest that it is likely that they are shaped by different factors.

In summary, in this paper we present the results of an exploratory study of the role of personal and contextual factors ("personality" and demographic differences) in modifying the role of administrative behavior. The focus is on principals. Context variation is defined in terms of measures of the district "psychological environment," and community, staff, and school characteristics. The administrative behaviors under consideration are those that are associated with measurable improvements in student achievement (Brandt, 1987).

## Method

The data reported here were collected as part of a large-scale study of principal leadership style conducted under the auspices of the National Center for School Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in collaboration with MetriTech, Inc.

### Sample

Questionnaires were mailed to a sample of public school principals in Illinois in the spring of 1988. The sample includes 160 principals from 74 elementary schools, 36 middle/junior high schools, and 50 senior high schools.

### Measures[1]

Two instruments were employed in this study. One instrument includes principals' reports of their instructional leadership behavior and their perceptions of the characteristics of their staff, school, and community. The other assesses principals'

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[1]More detailed descriptions of the instruments are available from MetriTech, Inc., 111 North Market Street, Champaign, IL 61820.

personal characteristics, including their self-reliance, self-esteem, and personal incentives as well as their perceptions of the goals stressed by the school district. A more detailed description of the instruments follows. Table 1 contains a list of sample items and constructs and the alpha index of internal consistency for each scale.

**Instructional Leadership Inventory (ILI).**

The ILI is designed for use with principals and other school leaders. It consists of 100 short, multiple-choice statements and questions that require approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. The ILI includes eight scales. Five scales represent major dimensions of administrative behavior: Defines Mission, Manages Curriculum, Supervises Teaching, Monitors Student Progress, and Promotes Instructional Climate. Administrators are asked how frequently they perform 48 tasks that fall into these behavioral dimensions. Five response options are provided that range from "Almost Never" to "Almost Always." The remaining three scales assess administrator perceptions of certain aspects of the work environment, including characteristics of their staff, the school, and the community. The coefficient alpha index of internal consistency for the eight scales ranges from .74 to .85.

**School Administrator Assessment Survey (SAAS).**

The SAAS is an adaptation of SPECTRUM, a multidimensional instrument designed to simultaneously assess the person, the job, and the psychological environment in which the person works (Braskamp & Maehr, 1985). Items from SPECTRUM have been adapted and modified to fit the school context and subjected to further validation work (Krug, 1989; in press).

Four scales measure personal incentives or the values administrators consider important and worthwhile in their work lives. These personal incentives include: Accomplishment, Recognition, Affiliation, and Power. Similar scales are used to assess the administrators' perceptions of the underlying views and beliefs of their school district. Closely related to the Personal Incentive Scales are two self-concept factors: Self-Reliance and Self-Esteem. Alpha coefficients of reliability range from .51 for the Power dimension to .87 for the Recognition dimension. Questions on the SAAS also assess administrators' gender, age, and experience as both a principal and as a teacher.

Analysis

Multivariate regression procedures were used to explore the relationship between personal and contextual characteristics and administrative behaviors. The analysis

Table 1
**Summary of Variables**

**Scales Measuring Principals' Reports of Leadership Behavior and Sample Items**

Define Mission (a = .80)

discuss school goals, purpose, and mission with staff
take advantage of an opportunity to stress and communicate school goals
focus on school goals in curriculum development

Promote Instructional Climate (a =.85)

encourage and support a staff member seeking additional training
join an informal discussion among staff members
seek advice from staff members in making a decision

Manage Curriculum (a=.74)

make detailed staff improvement plans
coordinate curriculum across grade levels
provide specific support for curriculum development

Supervise Teaching (a=.84)

spend time working on teaching skills with a teacher
sit in on a class
check to see that staff are working up to capacity

Monitor Student Progress (a =.81)

review a student's performance with a teachers
discuss assessment results with faculty to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses
make regular contact with teachers to evaluate student progress

**Scales Measuring Principals' Perceptions of Staff, School, and Community with Sample Items**

Staff Characteristics (a = .89)

Your staff is:
cohesive
motivated
capable, skillful

School Characteristics (a = .78)

Your school:
has inadequate facilities
has high student mobility
is clean, orderly, and safe

Community Characteristics (a = .80)

Your community:
is highly involved in education
encourages educational innovation
is ethnically diverse

**Scales Measuring Principals' Perceptions of District Culture with Sample Items**

Accomplishment (a = .80)

This school district stresses excellence
In this school district, we're encouraged to try new things
The Board of Education and central administrative staff expect us to be productive in our work

Affiliation (a = .85)

There's a close knit feeling among us in this school district
This school district really cares about me as a person
In this school district, there is respect for each individual

Recognition (a = .87)

This school district allows me to do things that I find personally satisfying
There are many incentives here to work hard
I regularly receive information about the quality of my work

Power (a = .51)

Competition among different work groups in this school district is actively encouraged
People spend a lot of time trying to get to know those in powerful positions in this district
The emphasis here is on letting us compete against each other and see who ends up the winner

**Scales Measuring Principals' Personal Characteristics with Sample Items**

Self-Reliance (a = .79)

I enjoy completing many easy tasks rather than just a few difficult ones
I get anxious when I don't know how well I'm doing
I'd rather do something at which I feel confident than something challenging and difficult

Self-Esteem (a = .62)

I can succeed at anything I want to do
I bounce back quickly from defeat
I'm relaxed when I'm about to undertake a difficult job

Principals' Personal Incentives

Accomplishment (a = .81)

I'm always thinking of ways to improve how I do things
I work hard to improve my skills
I enjoy trying to solve problems others consider impossible

Recognition (a = .82)

I want recognition for what I do
Having other people tell me that I did well is important to me
I feel great when I'm recognized for my accomplishments

Power (a = .82)

Winning is important to me
Successful people are competitive
I need to be the top person at whatever I do

Affiliation (a = .84)

I enjoy helping others even if I have to make some sacrifices
I go out of my way to be friendly
I trust people

was done in three steps. First, relationships between personal characteristics and the five administrative behaviors were examined, using the same model for each outcome. Considered in this analysis were principal gender, age, experience, self-concept, and personal incentives.

In the second analysis, relationships between school, community, and district context and principals' administrative behaviors were examined, again using the same model for each outcome. In this analysis, staff, school, and community characteristics, as well as the principals' perceptions of the psychological climate of the district, were considered.

Finally, both sets of variables were used to construct a model for each outcome separately. In this analysis, we started with the full set of variables and then reduced the model to include only the significant predictors for each administrative behavior. This analysis allowed us to assess which characteristics provided a "best-fit" model for each type of administrative behavior.

## Results

The first analysis considers the effects of principals' gender, age, experience, self-concept, and personal incentives on the five administrative behaviors. Multivariate regression analyses were run with each of these behaviors as outcomes. Results are given in Table 2.

Personal characteristics account for an average of 14% of the variance in administrative behaviors. Demographic differences between principals (age, gender, and experience) are significantly related to only one of these behaviors, that of Promoting Instructional Climate. Age has a positive relationship (beta = .21, $p < .05$), and experience has a negative relationship (beta = .17, $p < .08$) to principals' reports of their engagement in activities to promote the instructional environment in the school. An aspect of self-concept, that of personal self-esteem, is positively related to Supervising Teaching (beta = .18, $p < .05$). However, self-esteem is not related to any other types of administrative behaviors. Regarding the four personal incentives, an inclination toward Affiliation is positively related to all five behaviors (beta weight average is .24). A personal incentive toward Accomplishment is related only to Defines School Mission (beta = .24). A personal stress on goals involving Power and Recognition is unrelated to any of the administrative behaviors.

The second analysis considers the impact of the context of the school and community on principals' administrative behaviors. Multivariate regression analysis investigated the relationship between staff, school, community, and district

Table 2

**The Relationship between Principals' Leadership Behavior and Personal Characteristics**

| | Defines Mission | Manages Curriculum | Supervises Teaching | Monitors Std. Progress | Promotes Instructional Climate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sex | .01 | .02 | .05 | .02 | .07 |
| Age | -.04 | .05 | .07 | .09 | .21* |
| Experience as Principal | .04 | .02 | .00 | .12 | -.13 |
| Experience as Teacher | -.004 | -.001 | -.09 | -.05 | -.17~ |
| Self-Concept: | | | | | |
| Self-reliance | -.05 | .09 | -.01 | -.16 | -.01 |
| Self Esteem | .05 | -.04 | .18* | .09 | .09 |
| Personal Incentives: | | | | | |
| Affiliation | .23** | .21* | .24** | .26** | .24** |
| Accomplishment | .24* | .10 | .16 | .13 | .15 |
| Power | -.07 | -.04 | -.09 | -.05 | -.14 |
| Recognition | -.05 | .01 | -.06 | -.02 | -.01 |
| $R^2$ | .13* | .07 | .17** | .18** | .17** |

Note: All regression coefficients are given as standardized beta weights

N=153

~ = $p < .08$
* = $p < .05$
** = $p < .01$
*** = $p < .001$

characteristics and each of the five administrative behaviors. The results of this analysis are given in Table 3.

School, district, and community characteristics account for about 15% of the variance in administrative behaviors. Principals' positive assessment of their staff is related to all five administrative behaviors (average beta = .25), with its strongest relationship to activities related to Monitoring Student Progress. After adjusting for staff characteristics, however, neither school nor community characteristics are significantly related to principals' administrative behaviors. Of the four goal stresses in the district climate, an emphasis on Power is positively related to all three management behaviors (average beta weight = .22). There is also a marginally significant relationship between a district orientation toward Power and activities which define the school mission (beta = .16, $p < .08$) but no relationship to Promoting Instructional Climate. An emphasis in the district on Accomplishment is positively related to Managing Curriculum (beta = .33, $p < .05$) and somewhat related to Supervising Teaching (beta = .24, $p < .08$). Interestingly, after taking the other district, school, and staff characteristics into account, a district climate emphasizing Affiliation is somewhat negatively related to Managing Curriculum (beta = -.28, $p < .08$).

In the third analysis, both personal and contextual predictors of administrative behavior were entered in a regression analysis. Nonsignificant predictors were then removed until only those variables with a significant relationship to the behavior under consideration were left. The results of this analysis are given in Table 4.

These reduced models account for an average of 20% of the variance in administrative behaviors. The strongest model is for Monitoring Student Progress (29% of the variance accounted for) while the weakest is for Managing Curriculum (15% of the variance accounted for). Clearly, this analysis has not identified all the factors which predict these behaviors. However, the relationships do explain an important piece of the overall picture of principals' administrative behaviors.

Of the personal characteristics, a personal incentive for Affiliation is positively related to each behavior except Managing Curriculum (which has no significant relationship to personal characteristics). In addition, a personal incentive for Accomplishment is also positively related to a principal engaging in activities to Define the School Mission. Years Experience as Principal is positively related to Monitoring Student Progress (beta = .14) but negatively related to Promoting an Instructional Climate (beta = -.19, $p < .08$). Self-esteem is related only to Supervising Teaching (beta = .19). Age is positively related to Promoting an Instructional Climate (beta = .24) while Years Experience as Teacher has a negative relationship to this behavior (beta = -.19).

Table 3

**The Relationship between Principals' Leadership Behavior and Contextual Characteristics**

| | Defines Mission | Manages Curriculum | Supervises Teaching | Monitors Student Progress | Promotes Instructional Climate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Staff Characteristics | .22* | .23* | .24** | .32*** | .23* |
| School Characteristics | .08 | .02 | .04 | .03 | -.03 |
| Community Characteristics | -.05 | -.01 | .02 | .01 | .16 |
| District Culture: | | | | | |
| Affiliation | -.09 | -.28~ | -.13 | -.10 | -.10 |
| Accomplishment | -.04 | .33* | .24~ | .16 | .15 |
| Power | .16~ | .17* | .19* | .30*** | .14 |
| Recognition | .17 | .01 | -.14 | -.11 | -.14 |
| $R^2$ | .12** | .15*** | .13** | .23*** | .12** |

Note: All regression coefficients are given as standardized beta weights

~ = $p < .08$
* = $p < .05$
** = $p < .01$
*** = $p < .001$

Table 4

**The Relationship between Personal Characteristics, Contextual Characteristics, and Principal Leadership Behavior**

**Defines Mission**

| Predictors | Beta |
|---|---|
| Staff Characteristics | .20** |
| Personal Incentive for Accomplishment | .18* |
| Personal Incentive for Affiliation | .19* |
| $R^2$ | .16*** |

**Manages Curriculum**

| Predictors | Beta |
|---|---|
| Staff Characteristics | .23** |
| District Climate for Accomplishment | .33** |
| District Climate for Affiliation | -.28* |
| District Climate for Power | .17* |
| $R^2$ | .15*** |

**Monitors Student Progress**

| Predictors | Beta |
|---|---|
| Staff Characteristics | .26*** |
| Years Experience as Principal | .14* |
| Personal Incentive for Affiliation | .24*** |
| District Climate for Power | .27*** |
| $R^2$ | .29*** |

**Supervises Teaching**

| Predictors | Beta |
|---|---|
| Staff Characteristics | .19* |
| Personal Incentive for Affiliation | .22** |
| District Climate for Power | .16* |
| Self Esteem | .18* |
| $R^2$ | .20*** |

**Promotes Instructional Climate**

| Predictors | Beta |
|---|---|
| Age | .24* |
| Years Experience as Principal | -.19 (p = .07) |
| Years Experience as Teacher | -.19* |
| Personal Incentive for Affiliation | .28*** |
| $R^2$ | .14*** |

Note: Reduced regression models with only significant community, school, and personal predictors of principal leadership behavior entered.

*** $p < .001$
** $p < .01$
* $p < .05$

Of the contextual measures, Staff Characteristics are significantly related to each outcome with the exception of Promoting an Instructional Climate. District psychological environment is related to management behaviors, but not to leadership behaviors. Of the four psychological stresses at the district level, an emphasis on Power is positively related to all three management behaviors (beta = .17 for Managing Curriculum, .27 for Monitoring Students, and .16 for Supervising Teaching). In addition, a district emphasis on Accomplishment is positively related to Managing Curriculum (beta = .33) while an emphasis on Affiliation is again negatively related to Managing Curriculum (beta = -.28).

## Discussion

Overall, both personal and contextual variables are associated with administrative behavior--and almost equally so. That is not altogether surprising, given the body of literature on management and leadership which, over time, has tended to indicate the variable role of these factors (see for example, Yukl, 1989). In any event, the results do suggest that both personal and contextual factors contribute to what an administrator does. However, as these results are considered in greater detail, some interesting observations can be made.

Whereas both contextual and individual difference variables contribute to the prediction/explanation of administrative behavior, they appear to contribute in different ways. Earlier it was suggested that management behaviors may be influenced more by contextual factors while leadership behaviors may be influenced more by personal characteristics. There is some support for this prediction. The significant predictors of Managing Curriculum (a management behavior) are all contextual characteristics whereas the significant predictors of Promoting an Instructional Climate (a leadership behavior) are all personal characteristics. For the other leadership behaviors (Defining Mission) and management behaviors (Monitoring Student Progress and Supervising Teaching), both personal and contextual factors play a role.

Perhaps what is most interesting about these results is the nature of the personal and contextual characteristics that do and do not predict administrative behaviors. Personal characteristics such as gender, age, self-reliance, and self-esteem are unrelated to both management and leadership behaviors, with the exception of a positive relationship between age and Promoting Instructional Climate, and self-esteem and Supervising Teaching. More important in terms of influential personal characteristics are the incentives or goals of the individual. Leadership functions, in particular, seem to be influenced by a personal commitment to helping others, working with others, and trusting others (Personal Incentive for Affiliation).

Years experience as a principal predicts two administrative behaviors; there is a positive relationship to the management function, Monitors Student Progress, and a negative relationship to the leadership function, Promotes Instructional Climate. It is interesting that age has a positive relationship with Promotes Instructional Climate and experience has a negative relationship. Thus we are not dealing with a generational issue. Given the leadership/management distinctions, one might interpret this to suggest that experience leads to a greater focus on management as opposed to leadership. What happens to principals over time so that they are less likely to play this leadership role? That is a provocative question--one that should be pursued further.

Regarding contextual influences, it is interesting to note that the district psychological environment influences management behaviors, but not leadership behaviors. When the district emphasizes competition and social comparison, principals respond by monitoring, supervising, and managing. However, leadership functions, such as defining the mission of the school and promoting an instructional environment, are unrelated to district goals and stresses. Additionally, it is interesting to note that principals' managing of curriculum issues is associated with a de-emphasis on affiliative goals at the district level. It seems important for district officials to understand the consequences of the various goals they stress. If, indeed, a district emphasis on competition and power is conducive to management behaviors but not to leadership behaviors on the part of principals, it may be important for superintendents and central administrators to re-evaluate their goals in terms of their effects.

Community characteristics appear to be unrelated to either management or eadership functions. An interesting question to consider here is whether, or how, this might vary as a school initiates site-based management. One of the stated reasons for this devolution of authority is that the school becomes more responsive to community expectations that directly impinge on it. Thus, we might hypothesize that a change to site-based management would be reflected in an increased role of community characteristics in explaining administrative behaviors. In contrast, staff characteristics are associated with four of the five administrative behaviors. Principals who perceive that their staffs are committed and hard working are those who engage in both management and leadership behaviors as here defined.

## Conclusion

The results of this study must, of course, be viewed as preliminary. The study is exploratory in nature although it was constructed within the broad framework of current work on school leadership and sensitive to current organizational theory.

Such disclaimers aside, the results are of considerable interest both for what they say and what they suggest.

The results generally draw a picture that is in accord with what we know about school leadership. Thus, the important role of staff characteristics and the district culture, on the one hand, is readily understood in terms of the middle-management role played by the principal. However, it is especially interesting, and not altogether predictable, that the varying activities of the principal are differentially responsive to the twin contextual factors of importance: District and Staff. It is intriguing, perhaps a bit disturbing, that community characteristics are inconsequential. Whether current restructuring efforts leading to site-based management will change that is a tantalizing question to be answered in future studies.

Of particular interest is the relationship between the district psychological environment and administrative behaviors. Evidently, districts can affect principals' management activities. They may also influence these behaviors to the diminishment of leadership activities. In light of the recent emphasis on efforts to restructure schools, the variable role of the district in regard to principal behavior is of special interest.

All in all, the present study has opened up a number of interesting questions for further study. They are not altogether new questions, but they are questions that have not as yet been fully answered. There is some reason to believe that the variable assessed and the means of assessment employed in this study may make a contribution to obtaining better answers now than were available in the past.

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